



SPRING-SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2013

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Friends of Niños Adelante and especially the niños, I thank you for your continuing support of this great organization. I would like to give you a brief update on your organization.

Currently, we have 220 students in the program being supported by 220 sponsors. There are 82 in our new college program and 138 in junior high and high school. It has been eight years since the Board elected to support kids in college and we have had many graduates since then. We now have doctors, business associates and even an architect, to name a few.

We have completed the Zihua breakfast reunions for the year 2013. Both were very successful. At the February breakfast we had close to 300 people and the highlight was the speaking by our 10 most recent college graduates. Many new sponsors attended and met their student (and family) for the first time. If you have never attended one of the breakfast meetings, I strongly encourage you to do so. It is very rewarding to get to know your student and his or her family. This type of meeting lets the student (and family) know how much you care about them and their education. It encourages the student to work hard at school and is a very gratifying experience.

The organization has had two successful fundraisers in 2012/2013. We had a dinner in Zihuatanejo in February and an appeal letter in the fall. These fundraisers provide the necessary capital to run the organization. All of the sponsor's donations go directly to the students, so it is important to raise operating funds from these events. We remain in excellent financial condition for our continued support of the Mexico operations. (Niños Adelante).

I would like to thank Chris Rose for all of his contributions over the years, but especially his contributions as President for the last 2 years. Chris is part of the second generation of Niños supporters and is working on the third generation for involvement going forward. Chris will remain active on the Board of Directors and will continue to head up the fall fundraising efforts. Thanks for all that you do for the Niños Chris!!

I would also like to thank our English teachers. For many years, Shelaugh (and Ross) Yarnell, Tim Ellis and Leif Lindblom give up much of their vacation time in Zihua to teach the kids English. While this is only a start for the kids, it does give them a good feel for the language and enables us to see which kids have the drive and ability to go on to extended English classes. The kids have a lot of fun in these classes and the teachers "love them to death" for attending and participating. If you have never attended one of these classes, I would

encourage you to do so. It is most rewarding and fun to see these kids in action. Thanks to Leif, Shelaugh, Ross and Tim. You make a difference in the lives of these kids!!

If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact us via the addresses provided on the Friends of Ninos Adelante website at www.friendsofninosadelante.org We welcome your comments and suggestions.

For those of you that have communicated via e-mail with your student, thank you. Please be patient with the translation, which is sometimes difficult. If you want to communicate with your student or ask questions about your student, you can contact the Zihuatanejo office directly at ninosadelante@prodigy.net.mx Make sure you provide your name and the name of your student.

THANK YOU for your continued support of this great organization. You are making a difference in the lives of the Niños, their families, and the community.

On Behalf of your Board of Directors
Steve Leighton

A FAMILY SUCCEEDING WITH HELP

Below is a photo of Elidet (short one with large earrings) and Norma Rodriques Fuerte--the Fuerte sisters, we like to call them. They are two of the girls whom I sponsor.

They marched in today's Revolutionary parade representing their school, Sur Juana. Elidet, took the seven month training at Cruz Roja and is a volunteer paramedic on the ambulances. She is also attending a nursing course after her normal school hours on Mondays and Tuesdays and studying English with Stella. Not to be out-done and to hone her skills, Norma volunteers in the afternoon with "Tus Eres Zihua" helping with clerical tasks and more, and she attends Stella's English classes, too. The girls are doing well in their classes. I gave mom a sewing machine a year ago. Since then she has been taking sewing classes, sewn skirts to sell and made the girls outfits below.

The older brother, Nicasio, graduated top in his senior high class and is now one of 30 accepted into the Tecnologico's Accounting career. Because of Nick's age, Don and Verna Gray have helped him outside of Niños Adelante. He will be doing his military service on Sundays. Older sister, Rubicele, is completing her final months in Cetus 45 abierto. She graduated in January. She is also taking English classes with Stella (I pay for them separately). Like Nick, life interfered with Rubicel finishing school. She has a 4 year old boy. With a little help, she succeeded in completing her senior high education. She did this while working everyday to support her family. Her vision is to be a teacher.

The two younger brothers Jose in their first year at Eva Semano. sponsored by our good friends Kathy Schaur. This family is an example of why Niños Adelante is venture. They came from a small mountains where life became dangerous. Dad has always rancher, so finding work in the city He has worked tirelessly in a making the masa. They still don't comfortable conditions--literally in shack like ants (ormigas as dad loaned to them. But, bit by bit, moving ahead. They will be

I want to thank you and the long members of Friends of Niños making this program available to Zihua. Without this program, I wouldn't have had the to know and appreciate this family....nor be involved in such work. Mr. Bustos has my his devotion and service to these thought you should know.

Mary Ellen Jackson



and Audel are They are John and excellent a worth while village in the difficult and worked as a was difficult. tortilla factory live in a one room puts it) that is the kids are successes.

term Adelante for the kids in probably opportunity wonderful gratifying gratitude for kids. Just

EDITORS NOTE:



Maryellen Jackson had an incredible surprise at the International Women's Day Celebration on March 8, 2013 in Zihuatanejo. At the event mayor Eric Fernandez Balleteros and his wife Wendy, President of the municipal DIF, and members of the council honored her with the city government civil award "Matthean Lecuand Orb"

to recognize women who have had outstanding activities in political, social, and cultural endeavors. Maryellen is known for her charitable work to support actions to improve school infrastructure and provide scholarships to poor children so they can continue their studies. She also actively works to get donations for medications and supplies for a poor people's clinic. Maryellen volunteers her services at the Niños Adelante office to assist Jose Bustos and our students we are very proud of her. The mayor recognized the efforts of all women present and said they are the driving force of Zihuatanejo, a town that lives up to its name "Place of Beautiful Women".

MEET FOUR OF THE ORGANIZATION'S LEADERS

Beginning with this issue we would like to introduce some of the Friends of Niños Adelante board members. Please keep in mind we would welcome new faces to join us, along with their ideas, for our special organization. We hope some of you will consider this invitation.

Many thanks to all who are members of Friends of Niños Adelante for your generous contributions to this important endeavor. It is a joy to see many of our niños grow (along with some of their families) and become prepared to make this a better world.

In future issues we hope to include more of our current board members. Bob Albright –member at large, Beth Draving-member at large, Tim Ellis-member at large, Leif Lindblom, member at large, Bob Neal-member at large, Janie Robins-recording secretary, Chris Rose-past president, Bob Schaye-member at large, Gerry Tullos-member at large

OUR PRESIDENT-STEVE LEIGHTON

Military:

Enlisted in the US Army, May, 1966. Served in many capacities, but most importantly as an Advisor to the South Vietnamese Rangers in Viet Nam. The Ranger Team consisted of only 5 Americans and we served with approximately 400 Vietnamese soldiers. After Viet Nam duty, trained cadets at West Point and later attended the Minnesota Military Academy becoming a commissioned officer in the MN Army National Guard. After attaining the rank of Captain, gave up the military for a lucrative civilian career.

Civilian:

Graduated from Mound High School in 1965. Attended University of MN and also an aviation school. Attained a Commercial Pilot license in the 1970's. Spent 27 years with Fingerhut Companies, retiring in 2001. Final position was VP Marketing Services and Chief Privacy Officer.

Currently serve on Boards of a MN non-profit company, homeowners assn, and the Minnetonka Power Squadron as a Vessel Safety Examiner. Proud member of the 75th Ranger Regiment Assn. and Counterparts. Married, 2 adult daughters and 4 grandkids. Enjoy travel, boating, hunting and fishing.

Steven E. Leighton

Editors note:

This is Steve's second term as president of Friends of Niños Adelante. We feel very honored to have him accept our nomination. Steve, his wife, Donna and family have all been very active members of Friends of Niños Adelante. For many years they worked hard providing very successful fund raisers in Minneapolis with sponsors and their many friends. Our organization has been blessed by their tireless work.

TREASURER-THOMAS CULLIGAN

We are sponsoring our third student but have not been to Mexico in the last four years.

Katherine and I both are Michigan State graduates...I am a native and she spent her high school and college years there. I grew up in Grand Rapids and Katherine in the Detroit area. We have been in Northern California almost 50 years...technology, great weather and opportunity were the reasons...have had a number of positions in my career, the first being with IBM and then a number of technology based application software companies and partnerships.

Have lived in Sonoma for 15 years and have three of our four grand children in Shorewood, MN. Needless to say we are becoming familiar with the Twin City area.

That is my story and I am sticking with it.

Tom Culligan

PAST PRESIDENT -JAN MOE

HERE GOES....Born in a wonderful small river town in south west Minnesota...We lived right on the Minnesota river and it was lovely....Father was an attorney and my mother was a retired school principal and quite an accomplished pianist ... They were both terrific role models....Grew up, chronologically that is, took a while longer to mature into a reasonable adult....Matriculated to the UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA and graduated with a degree in elementary education and a minor in history....was thinking of LAW SCHOOL but guess who popped into the picture...Dear Jim....and since he was already in LAW SCHOOL, I figured we had enough of that...so we married and I began teaching...5th and 6th grade...mainly English and history with music on the side....I absolutely loved teaching, but remember, that was when you were allowed to discipline the children and you were not their best friends...you were hopefully, their role model for future years...I adored my classes and they appeared to adore me....so it was a respectful and mutual admiration society....I then began the second most important work of my life since being Jim's wife was the first.....Being a mother to three great children..Annie who is now 46, Molly 44 and Daniel 39..I Delighted in raising them in a happy home....I was involved with several outside activities...CAMPFIRE GIRLS, ROOM MOTHER...tutoring, singing in the choir...giving a voice recital at the age of 35...fun.....too numerous other activities to mention....but all enjoyable....Since the children have gone on to college and started their own families, Jim and I have been busy doing MOOMA and GRANDPA "stuff"...Traveling a ton, golfing...going to the lake and making sure we keep good accounts with dear and old friends...In many ways we are just exactly what most of our friends are....Contented and happy with our wonderful blessings and humbled by our truly good fortune....

Jani

Editors note:

Jani was our gracious president for two years and continued as past president on our board of directors. She and Jim have been devoted sponsors for several years and faithfully visit Zihuatanejo every year. They, along with many other sponsors, are the backbone of this great organization, people who work to see that many children (and families) are given a chance to use their talents, further their education and then go on to help their community be a better place. Friends of Niños Adelante is blessed to have so many dedicated members who also become friends in the process.

MEMBER AT LARGE-CAROL ROMAIN

Retired . Owned and operated Ladybug Playcare an Integrated Special Needs Daycare in Parksville British Columbia, Canada for 22 years. My husband Doug and I live in Zihuatanejo full time and vacation in Canada twice a year when we can't convince our children and grandchildren to come here.

I serve on the Por Los Niños Board of Directors in Zihuatanejo and am the liason person for the local Rotary Club.

Twice a year I run a fund raiser for my Rice and Beans Program to feed the poorest and brightest children of Zihuatanejo who attend Casa Para Niños Del Pacifico. A school started by Pacifica Resort for children with an 8. grade or better whose families have a monthly income of less than 2000 pesos (approx 165. USD.) Pacifica donates all inclusive vacation weeks and I raffle them off at \$50. each. All this turns into a truckload of food for the school each week. We can feed a child for 2.75 per week. They learn English, computer skills and my favorite, ethics. Many of these kids go on to become Niño's Adelante students.

When I am not busy with "kid things" I am a painter mostly of children although I prefer to paint on canvases rather than their faces.

Carol Romain

Editors note:

Carol is a very active member on the board of Friends of Niños Adelante. Carol along with Jose Bustos and other volunteers produced an outstanding fund raiser dinner for over 70 sponsors and friends visiting their students in Zihuatanejo this past February. The gourmet meal was prepared in Carol's kitchen by a professional chef whom Jose convinced to come out of retirement and served on the grounds of a church situated on the highest point overlooking Zihuatanejo inside the gated community of Cerro del Vigia.

The little church has no kitchen facility, therefore the hard working crew had to transport appliances (think stove etc.) and personally carry them up several stairs They also transported all tables and chairs and beautifully dressed them in linen, china and a centerpiece.

Everyone had a great time and helped to raise funds for operating expenses. Many thanks to these dedicated workers and all who make our great organization what it is today.

RAYMOND BRIGHT AND MARCELLE BRIGHT ESTATE

Friends of Niños Adelante wishes to acknowledge the generosity of our departed friends Raymond and Marcelle Bright, long time sponsors and supporters of Niños, dating to the early 90's when they sponsored their first of several students. Marcelle passed away in 2005 and Raymond continued his sponsorship until the graduation from college in 2010 of his last student, Jose Louis Vazquez. Raymond remained involved in the program as a donor until his death in August of 2011. Their will included a generous donation to Friends of Niños Adelante and for that and all their dedication we will remain forever grateful.

WHIZ - an acronym for Women Helping in Zihua.

For many of us, our involvement in Ixtapa, Zihuatanejo has been through Friends of Niños Adelante. My husband, Jack, and I have been sponsors for close to 30 years and have met so many wonderful people. One of them is Barb Szczudlak (pronounced scud-lack) who owns a permanent home in Ixtapa. Every year I reconnect with Barb and knew that she was very involved in volunteer work in the area. About 6 or 7 years ago, Barb asked if I would like to bring a few friends to meet with her and Joan Mckay (another ex-pat) to hear about

their ongoing projects. Each year the group meets in February and has grown so now there are about 15 of us and we are always looking for more women (and men) to become involved.

SUPER WHIZ - these are the women (and men) who make it happen in Zihuatanejo.

There are two churches involved in the volunteer work. The Ixtapa Christian Fellowship Group and the Zihuatanejo Christian Fellowship Group. The projects in which they are involved are:

The Baby Bundle Ministry

The Aids Project The Orphanage

The Senior Citizen Home

The Embroidery project

If you have any questions or would like to join WHIZ, please contact me, adriennebaldwin@hotmail.com

NEW AREA OF INTEREST

Many of us have traveled to Ixtapa/Zihuatanejo many times and are familiar with the areas nearby such as Barra de Potosi, Petalitan, and La Soledad de Maciel. La Soledad de what?? Yes, most of us have missed this major attraction in the area. La Soledad de Maciel is a large archeological site 15 miles from Zihuatanejo, just east of highway 200. La Chole as the locals call it has been known to area residents for many years. The Mexican government has recently assigned archeologists for more exploration of the area. If you would like information visit Soledaddemaciel.com

2014 IXTAPA-ZIHUATANEJO NIÑOS ACTIVITIES

January Breakfast—Sunday 19th

February Breakfast—Sunday 16th

Benefit Dinner Fund Raiser—Thursday 20th February

End